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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the purpose and history of the school library in the United States, and specifically in California, and discusses concerns and issues that need to be addressed to ensure that school libraries have a place in the future. The paper concludes that excellent school librarians are essential in ensuring that all young people have access to the reading materials that will help them become literate; school libraries must be at the core of any school plan to improve reading skills. School reform is needed to assist the declining library collections and services, especially at the elementary and junior high schools. Research shows that the size of a school's library staff and collection is a strong predictor of academic achievement. More funding is necessary to provide these resources. Recommendations are listed for: community support, funding, library collection development, needs of limited English students, reading, staff, materials selection, and communication. (Contains 61 references.) (AEF)

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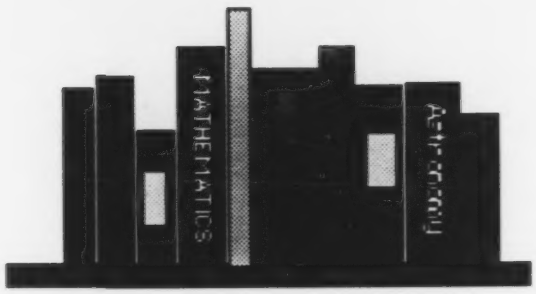
The Educational Impact of the School Library



Joyce H. Yoo

March 6, 1998
EDSE 695
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3/6/98
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The Educational Impact of the School Library

Introduction

When school libraries were established in the 1920's, their main function was to meet the reading interests of students. Now in the 1990's a school library continues to foster recreational reading along with providing meaningful research skills. Librarians and educators believe school libraries contribute to the quality of education. The standards presented in Information Power describe the school library program as a contributor to a student's individual growth and development (American Library Association, 1988). A revision of the national guidelines will continue to stress individual learning, yet also focus on the school as a whole (McCarthy, 1997). Although most school libraries have a strong commitment to helping students, drastic financial cutbacks have devastated many existing school library programs especially at the intermediate and elementary levels (Moore, 1997). The declining financial support for school libraries no doubt has effected the quality of education.

Students at schools with better funded libraries often have higher than average test scores, regardless their communities educational backgrounds (Krashen, 1996). According to some school library advocates, a school's library has a much stronger influence on reading scores than any of the factors now touted as being critical to success in reading, including the number of computers, class size and the amount of phonics instruction (McQuillan, 1997).

Numerous studies describe the positive impact of a successful school library program on a school's student population. Research has shown students who read school library books compared to students who read on their own achieve higher

reading scores (Farris, 1991). In other studies, students who have access to books in their school's library showed significantly higher reading scores than students with limited school library access (Didier, 1982 and Krashen, 1995). Reports on 221 Colorado public schools provided further evidence school libraries improve overall academic achievement (Lance, 1994).

Librarians firmly believe that a quality school library program contributes to the academic success of limited English speaking students particularly in the area of reading (Krashen, 1996). Since books at home are very scarce in the lives of these students, school libraries play a vital role in providing reading materials and promoting reading as an engaging activity. The school library and staff coordinate a program to encourage voluntary reading and raise student interest in the library (Piersma, 1993). In Every Person a Reader, the first recommendation to assist students in the reading process is to improve school libraries (Krashen, 1996). A quality literature program creates a comprehensive school library for all students and will ultimately enhance a student's enthusiasm to read.

Statement of the Problem

In order to know why school libraries today are in such poor conditions, one needs to know the purpose and history of the school library. Although the United States values school libraries, few exemplary school libraries exist. A primary challenge for school libraries is funding. Since political and community support tends to be limited most notably in California, the financial status of school libraries are constantly in limbo, particularly at the elementary and junior high levels. The major contributors of research strive to show the American public and politicians, how school libraries have improved students academic achievement. Unfortunately, few researchers are examining the effect of the school library on limited English speaking

students and their development of language skills, even though educators are aware of the large immigrant population in the United States. Research described in this paper will address these concerns and issues shedding light on the present status of school libraries.

Questions to be Addressed in the Literature Review

1. What is the purpose of the school library?
2. What is the history of the school library?
3. Who are the major contributors in school library research?
4. What is the relationship of the school library and students academic achievement?
5. What is the association of the school library and students' attitudes towards reading?
6. What is the impact of the school library on limited English speaking students?
7. Why is funding a major issue for school libraries?
8. What schools have exemplary school library programs?
9. What are the objectives of a exemplary school library?

Purpose of the School Library

The main purpose of school libraries is to support the educational goals of the school (Herring, 1982). The current standards presented in Information Power describes the school library program as a valuable contributor of the success of the school community (American Library Association, 1988). The vision to help students intellectually grow is also valued in European school libraries. Heidegger (1988) stated,

> "The task of the [European] school should prepare its pupils for life, to motivate and enable them to continue their education independently throughout their lives. To achieve this goal, it must also arouse the joy and pleasure of reading. This is only possible if a comprehensive range

of books, a library, is accessible." (p. 107)

In many schools, multimedia centers are a part of the school libraries. This new additions to the library provides new technological equipment and information, while also allowing students to borrow books and other materials. It is a public place where students are permitted to freely access a wide range of information (Peterson, 1979).

Definitions

1. School Libraries: Also known as a *school library media centers* or *learning resource centers* carry a wide variety of educational media in their collections (World Book, 1996). School libraries form a vital part to learning and teaching activities of the school community. The national school library objectives in Information Power (American Library Association, 1988) are:

    1. To provide intellectual access to information.
    2. To provide physical access to materials.
    3. To provide learning experiences that encourage users to become discriminating consumers and skilled creators of information.
    4. To provide resources and activities that contribute to lifelong learning (p. 2).

These objectives are implemented in a variety of ways to share common goals and principles of the school. Teachers will find resources that will help them enhance classroom instruction. Students are able to find materials that will assist them with their homework and research projects as well as a variety of books to read for personal pleasure.

Several studies have discussed the elements of the school library. Among those elements are:

* The access to a wide range of materials. Quality books, magazines, computer software, Internet access, and audiovisual aides, accompanied with classroom instruction and leisure-time reading are provided to students (Saunder, 1975,

Heidegger, 1987, & Woolls, 1993).

* Planned activities designed to increase literature appreciation to encourage recreational reading through programs and major special events involving the entire school community (Loertscher, 1987, Piersma, 1989, & Cramer, 1994).

* The physical access to the library is conveniently organized for every class to use along with time for students to read and find assistance (Saunders, 1975).

* The library is a spacious, organized, and attractive place that is comfortable and aesthetically inviting for students to enjoy (Loertscher, 1987 & Karpisek, 1989).

2. School Librarians: Also known as library *media specialists* or library *media teachers* select materials for the library and help students and teachers effectively use its resources (Good, 1973). School librarians also help students find enjoyable books to read in their free time. They have specialized training in librarianship and carry a teaching credential (World Book, 1996). The national school library objectives in Information Power (American Library Association, 1988) for school librarians are:

1. To provide resources and learning activities that represent a diversity of experiences, opinions, social and cultural perspectives.
2. To provide leadership, instruction, and consulting assistance in the use of instructional and informational technology. (p. 2)

Librarians guide these goals and principles with input of teachers, students, staff, and parents. They offer frequent, planned activities to instruct students and allow practice in the use of learning resources in varying formats. Librarians help students and teachers learn how to find, explore, and use an abundance of information.

3. Academic Achievement: Knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects usually designated by test scores or/and by marks assigned by teachers (Good, 1973).

4. Library Collection: Books, periodicals, computers, documents, maps, videotapes, visual and audio materials, photographs, games, and other resources contained in a school library (World Book, 1996).

5. Reading skill: An ability that is essential to successful performance in reading, such as word recognition, comprehension, organization, or remembrance (Good, p. 536).

History

Early History

For approximately 5,500 years, people have made written records on a variety of materials. At every stage in the develop of these written works, people have assembled collections of their records into libraries. From the Mesopotamia clay tablets written more than 5,000 years ago to Egyptian papyrus scrolls composed around 2,700 B.C., libraries have been found in these ancient cities (World Book, 1996). Since most people of ancient times could not read, libraries served only a small group literate population. In ancient Greece, Aristotle founded the most famous school library, while in the ancient Rome the first public library was planned by Julius Caesar. The word *library* derived from the Latin word meaning *book*. Libraries continued to flourish in the Middle Ages with Christian monasteries making major contributions to preserve numerous distinguished books.

Development of the School Library

The oldest library in the United States known as the Harvard University Library was founded by John Harvard in 1638. His donated money and 400 books set the stage for other colonial university libraries to follow. Several changes in the United States during the 1800's increased the popularity of libraries. The free public

education plan for every child led naturally to a movement for free public libraries. One of the nation's first tax-supported libraries was established in New Hampshire, in 1833. The idea spread to pass a New York law allowing school districts to use their taxes to establish school libraries in 1835 (Prostano, 1987). The modern age of school libraries is said to have begun in the late 1800's. State laws supported school libraries by permitting school libraries by permitting school districts to spend money on books and bookcases (Carroll, 1981). Most schools in the early 1900's had no trained librarians and few had libraries. School library development progressed slowly at the secondary level with only fifty trained librarians between 1900 to 1915 in the United States (Hopkins, 1991).

Standards for School Libraries

In 1920, the American Library Association adopted the first standards for school libraries. These standards specified that a school library should meet the reading interest of the students. Revised standards were developed in 1945 to define the library "As an active service agency integrated with the learning program of the school, not as an adjunct to it." (Karpisek, 1989, p. 4). The standards also stressed services to elementary as well as secondary libraries. For the first time, a criteria was established for evaluating the school library.

In 1960, American Association of School Librarians (AASL) standards enlarged the scope of collections and professional staff. It was also recommended that the librarian have teacher training as a minimum standard and preferably, teaching experience. The librarian was seen as an active participant in helping teachers prepare original materials as well as a resource person who could locate and provide materials. AASL created standard in 1969 to focus on people and programs rather than on materials and their arrangement.

The American Library Association (ALA) realized the need for education accountability and support for the school library program in 1988. The association created the national framework, Information Power to help educators understand what the goals and objectives of the school library (American Library Association, 1988). The standards presented in Information Power described the school library program as an important part of student's individual growth and development. After a decade, ALA is revising Information Power to broaden the vision in order to reach the entire school community (McCarthy, 1997). Based on committee discussions, the new vision will challenge school librarians to weave partnerships, exercise leadership, and advocate for student achievement and information literacy standards. In spite of all these positive changes, school libraries are struggling with the financial support to maintain a library budget. School librarians continue to foster, meaningful pleasure reading, yet struggle with the limited and out-dated library materials.

Contributors

Researchers in the school library field firmly believe that a quality school library program makes a positive educational impact of school libraries. The first extensive research on the impact of school libraries on student achievement was done by Elaine Didier (1982). Her dissertation showed significantly higher student reading scores and improved study skills, as a result of access to books in the school libraries with a full-time professional staff. Didier continued to contribute her knowledge as a Director of Business Administration Library and professor at the University of Michigan and editor of the national framework, Information Power. She sought to inform educators in the late 1980's the need for quality school libraries in the United States with credentialed librarians.

David Loertscher, a senior acquisition editor of *Libraries Unlimited*, became a

significant contributor to school library research in the late 1980's and early 1990's. His research also reinforced Didier's findings that students' reading scores improved as a result of libraries with large, up-to-date collections with full-time school librarians. Loertscher in 1988 created a school library taxonomy. His taxonomy was a landmark in how students reach various knowledge levels in library skills. Presently, Loertscher, a passionate advocate for school libraries continues to write several articles to various journals and presents his research to numerous associations. He has become a prominent spokesperson for school libraries.

Keith Lance and Stephen Krashen are recent contributors to school library research. Both newcomers have shown current research on the positive correction of the school library and academic achievement in the 1990's. Lance, a director of library research services of the Colorado Department of Education within the past few years has made an influential study. His study has encouraged the American Association of School Librarians to organize a committee to follow-up on his successful research of the 221 Colorado schools. Lance has spoken to several national conferences to share his findings: better-funded school libraries achieve high reading scores. Krashen, a professor of education at the University of Southern California recently began looking at the various reading strategies and saw a strong connection to school libraries. A supporter of improving students' reading ability by improving the condition of school libraries, Krashen began collaborating with school librarians in the 1995. Krashen's current research emphasizes on the California school library collection and it's impact on student reading achievement.

Major Issues

1. Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is desired by educators and seen as an important

educational goal. Student use of the school libraries can show student success in this several studies. Evidence of the positive impact of libraries on academic achievement in 221 Colorado public schools was examined (Lance, 1994). The findings of this study indicated the importance of library media expenditures and particularly the staff and collection promote academic achievement. The results stated librarians instructing students in research skills can heighten student test scores. A well funded school library will ultimately fostered academic achievement by providing students access to a rich collection and quality library staff.

In a longitudinal survey on students undergoing initial teacher education in South Africa, no association with school library frequency use and academic success was found (Olen, 1995). The 603 students attending South Africa schools with school libraries staffed by either a full-time or part-time school librarian were surveyed. Through cross-tabulations of the students' academic achievement questionnaires and frequent use of the school library the research indicated no significant associations between students academic success and library use.

In 535 Michigan public school districts findings showed no significant difference in the overall student performance yet concluded, "in districts with and without professional library media personnel at both fourth and seventh grade levels, there was a moderate to high positive correlation between attainment of the individual study skills objectives". (Didier, 1982, p. 135) In addition, student achievement in reading, as measured by the Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests, appears to be significantly different at the seventh grade level in schools with library media personnel as compared to schools without such personnel.

2. Reading Skills

Masterton (1953) examined the role of the school library in the reading program

of the school. She found that students scored higher on reading tests in schools with centralized school libraries and professional librarians. Masterton concluded, " a central school library with an active, well supervised program may have a considerable, measurable, and beneficial effect upon the reading growth of the children whom it serves." (p. 47)

Another research comparing student reading in elementary schools with and without central libraries noted children with a school library read more varied books in content and of better quality (Monahan, 1956). After two months, students' quantity, quality, and variety of reading were recorded and analyzed. Findings of the study stated students a school with a central library read more pages and showed more motivation to read, yet showed no significant difference in the standardized reading tests or reading abilities of the students at the two schools. Monahan suggested, "the greater variety and easier accessibility of materials in the school library and the stimulation and guidance in the selecting of books provided by the librarian have a beneficial effect upon the reading of boys and girls." (p. 58)

Many educators question whether limited English speaking students can benefit from the library (Hastings & Tanner, 1963). They determined whether improved English language skills could be developed at the tenth-grade level through systematic library experiences in place of the traditional emphasis on formal English grammar. Four English classes in San Francisco were divided in groups. All groups were given a pretest and post-test. Their findings proved the experimental groups given instruction and experience in the use of a variety of library references made significantly higher scores in spelling, mechanics of English, and total language skills tests than did the control groups that made little or no use of such library work.

Another study on twelfth grade English students indicated their test scores on the California Assessment Program improved due to library directions and time to

complete a library reference review exercise worksheet (Gilland, 1986). This particular library activity did not show students had significantly higher scores in vocabulary, comprehension both literal, and interpretive/critical portions, yet their study-location skills appeared significant improvement from previous year. According to Gilland, "It does appear that the scores of our twelfth graders increased on the study-location skill questions, and that this increase on this portion of the test has had a positive impact on their reading scores." (p. 69)

Another study indicated a strong correlation to library usage and reading scores (Farris, 1991). The purpose of the study was to provide information on the reading achievement of sixth-grade students in rural elementary schools, school library usage, and student participation in the Scholastic Paperback Club. Schools that completed the two-surveys consisting of 15 questions provided the necessary information. The study did not reveal statistically significant differences between paperback book club purchases or number of library volumes held and reading comprehension achievement of sixth-grade students. A significant difference however was found between library circulation and reading achievement. The findings suggest the elementary school librarians is important in encouraging reading and assisting with student selection of books.

Stephen Krashen (1995) also supported libraries improve student reading scores. Fourth-grade scores on the NAEP Reading Comprehensive test were used as a measure. Scores from 41 states were utilized. Data on elementary school library media centers were taken including the average number of books per student per state. "The negative relations could be a reflection of concern- librarians in states with low reading scores and less access to books may attempt to compensate by providing more services."(p. 236) Results indicated librarians who provide more services neglect more important aspects of the library such as access to books.

Another study by Jeff McQuillan (1996) sought to expand and confirm Krashen's findings by using the verbal section of the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) scores as a measure of reading achievement. McQuillan found that the school library quality and public library use were the most reliable predictors of reading achievement at the high school level in the United States, even when controlling such factors as per pupil spending, classroom size, and amount of computer software available.

3. Student Reading Attitude associated to the School Library

Libraries have traditionally been associated with reading as a recreational activity. A study explored the reading behaviors of rural teens in North Carolina (Bracy, 1996). A survey was used to determine the leisure reading patterns of 362 ninth grade students. Eighty-two percent of the students indicated they read in their spare time. By gender, 72 percent of the males and 92 percent of the females read for leisure. For males, the top three categories of reading materials were magazines, sports/sports biographies, and comic books. For females, the top three categories were romance, mystery, and magazines. The primary source of reading materials was the school library. Most attitudes expressed toward reading were positive, but reading was rarely selected as the favorite use of spare time. The overwhelming majority of teens chose leisure reading materials through the recommendations friends. Although some mentioned the influence of teachers or librarians in selecting books to read in their leisure, this response was not statistically significant.

Unfortunately some junior high students have negative attitudes towards reading and find no positive effect of the school library to change their attitudes. Johnston (1990) realized eight junior high students had negative attitudes towards reading and designed a program to modify their negative attitudes. Although most adolescents are capable of reading independently, these teenagers stopped reading

for various factors. These eighth grade students did not voluntarily check out books from the school library and had low scores on the reading Educational Records Bureau sub-tests in reading fluency and comprehension. The goal of this program was to provide a regular opportunity for success experiences in reading to see if the students negative attitudes changed. These students used the school library on a weekly basis. They were given a variety of strategies for independent learning along with a broad range of recreational and content area reading materials. To determine the success of this program the Estes Survey of Reading Attitudes were administered in the fall and the spring to show a positive gains in reading attitude among these eighth students.

Duggins (1989) examined middle school students and their motivation to read in a three year longitudinal study. With the California Media and Education Librarians' Literature Reading Survey as the instrument for collection of data, 753 sixth graders from 10 ethnic groups were given this questionnaire survey. No differences were found in the first year among the twelve-year-old students from various ethnic backgrounds. In the second and third year, as 7th and 8th graders, students showed a lose of interest in reading by 10%. Although no evidence proved peer influence, Duggins explained, "Peer relationships and group membership exert tremendous power over adolescent behavior, perhaps even determine the likelihood of an expressed interest in reading." (p. 14) The study analyzed the school library collection and services of various middle schools and recommended librarians asses show they meet the needs of adolescent society. Duggins remarked, "The value of libraries, both public and school, cannot be overestimated when considering the development of attitudes toward reading. In a sense, libraries may be considered as book retailers for young readers; their obligation to entice consumers is obvious." (p. 15)

The measurement of student attitudes/behavior associated with school library

has often been found in questionnaire surveys and interviews. One study examined the effect of the use of non-print materials of high school media programs on student attitudes and behaviors based on 15 public high schools in Calgary, Canada (Hodges, 1985). Each school was represented by two twelfth grade classes on a 21 item questionnaire. The findings indicated students and teachers feel audio visual materials offered a wider variety of research opportunities and accommodated individual student learning. The school where students use the library most indicated 78% of students agreed with the statement the school library is very important for success in school. Students gathering data by listening to audio tapes, watching a movie, making a set of slides with a friend indicated a positive attitude towards the library.

4. Limited English Speaking Student Needs

Despite the studies on student academic achievement and student behaviors related to the school library, research on library use by the increasing immigrant student population is limited. School librarians firmly believe a quality school library contributes to the academic lives of limited English speaking students, particularly in reading. Since books at home are very scarce in the lives of these students, school libraries play a vital role in providing reading materials and promoting reading as an engaging activity (Krashen, 1996). Since reading can be a difficult process for these students, the school library staff coordinates a program to raise student interest in reading and encourages them to read a wide range of materials (Piersma, 1993). In Every Person a Reader, the first recommendation to assist all students in reading process is improving school libraries (Krashen, 1996)

With the rising number of immigrants coming to California, educators are addressing the ways to ensure their educational success. Although advocates for

school libraries believe the school library is an extremely helpful tool in developing literacy among immigrant students, research have found little support for this claim. One research conducted by Connor (1983) sought to find whether library visits was one of the best predictors in improving reading scores among Vietnamese-speaking students. She studied 91 limited English students in the Madison, Wisconsin public schools, grades 2 through 12. These students were examined through a questionnaire and the results of their MAT6 reading comprehension scores. No significant findings were found in library visits and reading performances. The best predictors of reading performance were students' grades, Vietnamese language background, amount of English spoken at home, higher level paternal occupation, and ESL class participation.

In terms of immigrant parents involvement in the school libraries, one study surveyed this population. Constantino (1995) conducted a study to determine whether immigrant parents were aware of the library system. Interviews with 27 parents who spoke Spanish, Chinese and Korean indicated that many parents lacked knowledge concerning libraries and even felt a sense of fear in using them. The results of this study indicated immigrant parents do not understand the school library program and have limited access or information about it.

Controversies

Funding

The California legislature in 1948 established funds for library facilities with books and services (Saunders, 1975). With the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958, federal aid financially supported school libraries nationwide. Congressional passage of Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965 provided another lead forward for school libraries: $234,000,000 was

appropriated for library and instructional materials in 1966 with an additional $80,000,000 budgeted in 1967 (Moore, 1997). Although funding in the 1960's was generously given to school libraries, guidelines for continual funding of many school library were not set in place. By the 1970's and 1980's federal monies was dramatically pulled back. The financial commitment to school libraries in the 1990's is shaky. School libraries with excellent collections and services are found in the high socioeconomic communities while poor communities have limited school libraries and services.

The support of school board members and administrators for school libraries, staff, and resources has varied over the years. A nationwide survey was taken to investigated the present quality of library collections and services at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels (White, 1990). This survey, based on the Information Power guidelines, indicated that California has extremely poor library collections and services. Nationally, California ranks 45th in the number of books per student and 50th in the ratio of librarians to students (McQuillan, 1997). Although some particular California school libraries try to maintain a strong commitment to helping students, others have slashed or decreased existing school library programs, especially in intermediate and elementary levels (Moore, 1997). According to many educators, the declining financial support for school libraries has ultimately effect the quality of education in California (White, 1990, Lance, 1994, Krashen, 1996, and McQuillan, 1997).

Programs

The school library programs vary from school to school yet a comprehensive profile study available on exemplary library programs was conducted by Seager (1987). The report profiled sixty-two library programs that were selected based on

their submitted descriptions of innovative services that could be replicated in different settings. Different topic areas were described such as the programs which teach students how to gather, evaluate and use information available in the library. Other topics on the school libraries modeled the joint library/teacher involvement in student teaching. A profile study of Abramson High School in New Orleans, Louisiana was taken as a result of their outstanding library research program.

The school library has three librarians and two clerical assistance, along with two student assistance. In 1985-86, the program budget was $29,441. The program began in 1983, when the library staff observed the lack of adequate research skills of the student population. To solve this problem the library research program was developed with four goals:

1. To help students develop proficiency in research techniques.
2. To provide opportunities for students to learn how to use new media.
3. To make students aware of all the services available in the library.
4. To refer students to academic libraries when information is not available.

The first step in starting the program was testing all incoming freshman to determine their level of knowledge. Test scores indicated students understood the Dewey Decimal system, the arrange of books, and the use of card catalog. Students needed instruction in the use of the "Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature" and such special references as handbooks, atlases, biographical dictionaries, and indexes. Based on the test information, the library staff developed a four year program to emphasize reference materials and techniques to help students in research. Students at the end of each year are tested with the Test of Library/Study Skills by Gullette and Hatfield. The librarians make a comparative study of test scores of the different grade levels to determine to what extent students are achieving the needs skills to become independent users of libraries.

Another outstanding school library program was found in Maconnaquah, Indiana (Middle Grades Reading Network, 1995). This high school of 2,000 students with the support of the school board sought to improve the school library by spending $450,000. The monies for the library update plan provided two books per pupil per year. In addition to the collection, the school library had professional librarians who were knowledgeable in assisting student learn how to use the resources in the library.

Synthesis

The abundant research on school libraries has made a positive academic impact on the school community. Based on the studies examined, two provided examples of particular successful school libraries. The research classified seen as methodical, statistical data seeks to inform the public of the positive educational impact and the need for more financial support for school libraries.

The literature indicates the national standards based on Information Power continues to be recognized as relevant, yet demands a new vision for school community support and involvement (McCarthy, 1997). Major contributors of research Didier, Krashen, Lance, and Loertscher continue to be the prominent advocates for educational reform in the school library field. Their research shows the dramatic positive educational impact of the school library on the students.

Analysis

The review of research indicates school libraries make a positive impact in academic achievement, reading skills, and student attitudes towards reading. Although some studies concluded no significant evidence of school libraries contributing to student success, the majority of research examined in this paper showed strong evidence in support of school libraries. The analysis of research is

summarized in the following areas:

Academic Achievement:

* An overall positive impact of 221 Colorado library media centers on academic achievement was seen when current, large collection and quality services were provided (Lance, 1994).

* Student reading scores in the Michigan study appeared to be significantly different at the seventh grade level in schools with library media personnel as compared to schools without such personnel, yet no significant difference in the mean percentage of overall student performance was seen (Didier, 1982).

2. Reading Skills

* Students scored higher on reading tests in schools with centralized school libraries and professional librarians (Monahan, 1956).

*Experimental groups given instruction and experience in the use of a variety of library references made significantly higher scores in spelling, mechanics of English, and total language skills tests than did the control groups that made little or no use of such library work (Hasting & Tanner, 1963).

*Test scores in study-location skill questions on the California Assessment Program improved due to library directions and time to complete a library reference review exercise worksheet (Gilland, 1986).

* A significant difference was found between library circulation and reading achievement (Farris, 1991).

*School library quality and public library use were the most reliable predictors of reading achievement at the high school level (McQuillan, 1996).

3. Student Reading Attitude associated to the School Library

* A North Carolina student survey determined the primary source of reading materials was the school library. Most attitudes expressed toward reading were positive, but reading was rarely selected as the favorite use of spare time. The overwhelming majority of teens chose leisure reading materials through the recommendations friends. Although some mentioned the influence of teachers or librarians in selecting books to read in their leisure, this response was not statistically significant (Brady, 1996).

*Eight junior high students who did not voluntarily check out books from the school library and had low scores on the reading Educational Records Bureau sub-tests in reading fluency and comprehension after a year of regular library visits showed a positive gains in reading attitude among the eighth students (Johnston, 1990).

* Effect of the use of non-print materials of high school media programs on student attitudes and behaviors based on 15 public high schools in Calgary, Canada indicated 78% of students agreed with the statement the school library is very important for success in school. Students gathering data by listening to audio tapes, watching a movie, making a set of slides with a friend indicated a positive attitude towards the library (Hodges, 1985).

Conclusion

How will California face the challenges of the twenty-first century? Whatever path the state pursues, it is clear school libraries will be essential for the future of our students. Excellent school librarians are essential if we are to ensure that all young people have access to the rich reading materials that will help them to become literate. School libraries must be at the heart of any school plan to improve reading schools.

Overwhelming evidence indicates school libraries make a positive education impact on the lives of students, yet California fails to value school libraries. School reform is needed to assist the declining library collections and little to no existing library services especially at the elementary and junior high schools. As mentioned by several research the size of a school library's staff and collection are strong school predictors of academic achievement. The two exemplary school library programs show how school libraries are at the heart of the school and how they provide resource for students when properly funded. In both schools, school librarians and staff assisted their students to learn how to use the library. These school communities the library was recognized as valuable. To meet the challenges of the future successfully, excellent school libraries need to offer access to a rich collection of knowledge.

The results of numerous studies suggest funding for libraries is a wise investment since there is a likelihood of increasing student academic success. The school community must see the overall value of libraries. With a small school library budget of $2,000, I must constantly voice the needs for more books and materials to help students with their homework and research projects. Hopefully with these studies, teachers, parents, and administrators will make school libraries a top priority to financially support.

Recommendations

The following recommendations seek to promote quality school libraries:

1. **Community Support**: School community (teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders) need to study their library collection and services and design plans to improve the school library.

2. **Funding**: Adequate monetary support from the district, state, and federal need to be allocated.

3. **Library Collection:** Access to current, appealing, high-interest, and useful books and other library materials need to be available in school libraries.

4. **Needs of Limited English Students**: School libraries should assist limited English students with ample reading materials in their primary language.

5. **Reading**: Encouragement to value reading is need within the school library. A school library program that values, promotes, and encourages students to read for a variety of purposes- for pleasure, information, and exploration.

6. **Staff:** A full-time professional librarian and trained staff are needed in all schools.

7. **Services:** The teachers and students need to be given a yearly survey to see how the current library collection and services can better service the school community.

8. **Selection**: Develop a selection committee composed of library staff, students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members to help select new materials for the library.

9. **Communication:** The library staff, students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members need to discuss on a regular basis the student needs and school goals to create an excellent school library.

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